

A STUDY OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES IN VHEMBE DISTRICT OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE

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Abstract: This study outlines the challenges that South African education systems face, as well as how to improve governance as an equal partner, in order to produce long-term results throughout the country equated to some countries in the continent which are doing well like Equatorial Guinea and Zimbabwe which have got effective educational systems in place ahead of South Africa in terms of literacy to the country's population when it comes to the fundamentals of education. The dawn of democracy placed children's education in the hands of parents so that they could reap the benefits of their own intentions and hard work on their children's education, as the government in power in the country believes that people shall govern, and indeed, parents govern in this aspect of education (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:1). The old school system of committee was notable for racism, undemocratically together with inequality and it had been gender insensitive (The Educators Voice, 1996:16). The education system was highly authoritative and hierarchical. Parents and the community had little influence on what happened in the schools (DoE, 1997:7).

The aims of the study were to find out amongst others if there is a meaningful partnership between the department of education and SGBs towards the education of the same child. The study also aims to empower the governors so that they could be able to perform their constitutional obligations with confidence in order to hold anyone accountable in a fair, transparent and just manner for the benefit of the school particularly in maths and science; the study aimed to establish the effectiveness of the governors if such has got bearing to the final results of the school. The problem statement which was a dire need to assess and evaluate the adherence of good leadership and good governance from governors to an extent that such doings in Vhembe District could produce quality results as set by the schools through the SGBs after being empowered was addressed despite lack of literature. The study applied both methods to carry out the research but mainly relying on quantitative approach than qualitative approach and 123 participants were targeted in this study from four schools and one circuit.

The study found that the department and governors in Vhembe District have sound relations for the benefit of the learners however the literature of the study found that in most cases the department does not regard governors as equal partners who should be given such space as they imposed a number of things without consulting the SGBs. The study also found that governors after being trained were doing well in their respective schools to set the goals and make follow-ups on their goals in which it was proven that maths and science were passed normal in those four comparable schools particularly in lower grades from grade 7 to grade 8. The study found the SGBs were not given enough support in time by the department should they come across challenges particularly when it comes to reported corruption and mismanagement of funds for the attention of the department to act. The study concluded that governors with rudimentary education do perform better in their respective portfolio and such makes governance and administration to be effective in realising the set goals of the school as they are able to detect failures at an early stage and come up with plans to improve teaching and learning at the school. The study also concluded that schools with extra classes are likely to perform better on maths and science in rural areas. The study recommended that training of governors should be undertaken by external service provider rather than the department itself or by the principals who in turn have to report to the same governors. The recommendation for permanent appointment of securities at school was made. The study also recommended incentives for better performance from maths and science teachers particularly in grade 9.

Keywords: Governors (School Governing Body Members); parents; educators; learners; school community; department of education; performance; responsibility; governance and administration.

1. 1 Introduction and background

The whole aim of the study is to enhance performance of School Governing Bodies in Vhembe District public schools in order to enable them to adhere to the basic principles of good leadership and good governance in which ultimately could improve the results particularly in Maths education and Science. Education is vital to the development of South Africa. The value of education should be good enough in order for learners to acquire valuable skill and knowledge in the international economy. The norm of education is the corner stone of economic development and transformation (Bayat, Louw & Rena, 2014: 53). In South Africa, there is legislation that allows parents and communities to work with the South African Department of Basic Education (SADBE, 2020: 1-16). Ensuring the quality of education is a key mandate of the SADBE and provincial offices of the SADBE. Enabling pupils in primary schools to master basic numeracy, reading and writing skills is essential for laying the foundation for a successful teaching and learning system at the secondary school level.

In recent years, the Limpopo Province Provincial Department of Education has established school governing bodies with a view to improve the quality of school level education in public schools. Studies conducted by Duma, Kapueja & Khanyile (2011:51) have found that it is essential for members of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) to be given the necessary training in areas related to leadership, accountability, the recruitment of employees, report writing, presentation of research reports and conducting quality audit exercises in public schools. Studies by Hall and De Lannoy (2019: 14) have highlighted the need for accountability and transparency among school governing board members and inspectors. SASA (Act no. 84 of 1996) states that parents and legal guardians of pupils in public schools are eligible for serving as members of SGBs although such governing bodies in Vhembe District do not actively encourage parents and legal guardians to be elected for membership of School Governing Bodies (SGBs). As a result, local communities are not encouraged to take part in school governing activities which lead to poor governance systems to the detrimental of quality education in mostly public schools as there are no tight measures in place to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning in order to improve them.

The study aims to enhance the performance of the SGBs in order to have necessary skills when performing their functions so that they can have an equal status of partnership in the education sector with the department of education for the benefit of the learners and community at large. Studies by Du Preez and Roux (2010: 14-19) have pointed out that SGBs are effective only when their members include parents, legal guardians and members of local communities. According to the authors, failure to allow parents and legal guardians to take part in SGBs amounts to undermining the Schools Act (Act no. 84 of 1996). Public schools cannot fulfil their mandates unless they are willing to allow members of local communities to take part in planning and decision-making processes that affect the quality of education provided to their pupils. Iwu, Ezeuduji, Iwu, Ikebuaku and Tengeh (2018: 25) have argued that School Governing Bodies (SGBs) must be allowed to take part in developing policies, enforcing discipline, the assessment of the quality of education, and raising funds and resources that are required in poorly resourced public schools. Doing so has the potential for instilling discipline, accountability, professionalism and productivity in poorly resourced South African public schools (Mncube & Mafora, 2013:20). The study conducted by Worku (2019: 109-120) in Tshwane North District public schools has shown that it is quite helpful to train SGB members so that they play their roles effectively.

1.2 Objectives of the study:

- To assess and evaluate the quality of partnership amongst all affected parties;
- To determine whether the applicable system has appropriate institutional policies for ensuring sound governance and administration in education;
- To identify the challenges that could hamper the envisaged partnership compared to how things were done in the past under apartheid regime;
- To assess and evaluate the degree of performance by learners and teachers during the course of the year within the current system in place if the intended results are achieved to the satisfactory of school community at large and;
- To establish whether effectiveness of the school governing bodies have a direct impact on the quality of the

results of the schools.

2. 1 Literature Review

The South African Education System needs urgent action. The dawn of democracy in South Africa has seen the passing of legislation specifying the participation of various stakeholders in our schools. The passage of legislation outlining the role of different stakeholders in school governance has been a feature of South Africa's democratic transition (Mosoge & Van der Westhuizen, 1997:67). The establishment of the SGBs was a clear expression of the democratic ideal, which gave the local community an opportunity to make important decisions regarding the management and governance of the institutions to which they are attached (Bisschoff & Phakoa, 1999: 93). Changes in the governance and management of education have taken place worldwide, such as the inclusion of different stakeholders in the SGB structures (Mahlangu, 2008:125). This inception gave schools mandate to govern and run their own affairs for the benefit of their learners. Schools are now governed by elected school governing bodies (SGBs) who develop policies, adopt constitutions, monitor implementations of agreed decisions, support the professional performance and administrative duties in making sure that schools perform their duties effectively and efficiently to attain quality results (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:3).

Human capacity, school management, district support, infrastructure, and results-oriented mutual accountability between schools and communities are the priorities in basic education (NPD-2030, 2012:295). The interests of all stakeholders should be aligned to support the common goal of achieving good education outcomes that are responsive to community needs and economic development (NDP-2030, 2012:303). Sergiovani (2001) cites Rousseau (a French philosopher of the eighteenth century) who made the point that a community is an entity that embodies the ability of individuals to come together to serve the common good (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo, 2008:11). The notion of grassroots community participation was constituted; the democratisation of education entails that stakeholders must be more actively and effectively involved in the activities of the school (Mahlangu, 2008:25). The top priority of South African government was to implement capacity-building programmes that would equip the SGBs to be effective. These initiations can be viewed as a tool for promoting a vibrant teaching and learning environment and strong administration, and governance system in public schools (Kekana & Makura, 2020:440). With these views by different authors above, at this stage our education system should be at an advanced stage in terms of governance and administration, however, the opposite is still seen in our schools.

Partnership in education between social structures with an interest in education is important for the effective provision of education and although it was not fully acknowledged in the past by the State, it is extended in the current democratic era (Dekker & Van Schalkwyk, 1995:483). The single most important investment any country can make to its people is education. It has intrinsic and instrumental value in creating societies that are better able to respond to the challenges of the 21st century (NDP-2030, 2012:296). The SGB may solicit the voluntarily service of parents who have expertise in particular 'problem' subjects of the school e.g., Physical Science, Natural Science, Mathematics or Accounting. In a situation where none of their members or parents can teach any of the 'problem' subjects the governing body can create an "SGB teaching post", engage the services of an experienced and qualified educator to teach the learners till such time that the department of education offers the school a grant to appoint the teacher permanently (Quan-Baffour, 2006:41). As a researcher I am of the view that to see this happening in our schools National Planning Commission should oversee its product which is National Development Plan (NDP) if infrastructures and resources are channeled to all schools and if all stakeholders are embraced in making our education inclusive to all community structures in order to realise good governance and administration as envisaged by this plan.

Studies by Heystek and Paquette cited (Van Wyk, 2004:49) explain that this proliferation poses a huge governance challenge for schools because neither parents nor educators in South Africa have much experience with participatory decision-making because principals were once thought to be the only people with the necessary expertise and authority to make decisions. Good public-school governance requires a flourishing partnership, based on mutual interest and confidence amongst the constituencies, regarding the SGB, which will support the school (RSA, 1996c:17-18). The researcher believes that vigorous empowerment of governors to carry out this constitutional obligation could succeed if independent institution is tasked with this assignment unlike today in which the department has to see to it that trainings and workshops do happen after SGBs have been elected and only orientation does take place for a day and the rest of three years nothing will be done to empower governors.

All stakeholders should be provided with clear information on accountability measures; accountability measures are likely to be met with resistance because they change the balance of power. At first, they will add to the workload of the teachers and principals and put new obligations on parents. Once the system and routines are established, the workload will lessen and the system will deliver benefits for everyone (NDP-2030, 2012:311). This practice is still prevalent in townships and rural schools, making it difficult for principals to delegate power of governance to the responsible structure mandated by the Constitution.

In a narrower sense, *the school community* is a type of community life in which the school principal, teachers, parents, children, and former students collaborate in the interests of educative teaching and child training (Van der Westhuizen, 2015:406). Study by Postma (1990:164) calls educative teaching a collaborative act. By this he means that the same child is being educated and taught by both parents and teachers. Although the state accepts responsibility for providing formal education, the individual, parents and the entire community/society have a joint responsibility and authority in that respect (Van der Westhuizen, 2015:408). In the interests of the education of the child, the contact and cooperation between parents and teachers should denote a partnership. A partnership of this nature is the best strategy to get parents and educators working together on education and to share the responsibility for education (Van Schalkwyk, 1990:39). The department on the other hand must guard against their actions and decisions being seen as encroaching on the rights and powers of the SGBs as this would inevitably lead to SGBs becoming less involved and less involved and less committed to the relationship, which would have catastrophic consequences for education and governance in schools (Clase, Kok & Van der Merwe 2007:260)

The study by Van Schalkwyk (1990:19) stated that parent involvement is a matter of principle, by a virtue of his or her parenthood, the parent is the primary and natural educator of his or her child and for this reason bears the chief responsibility for the child's instruction and education. A parent is equally responsible for what happens to his or her child during formal education. Based on the theories of Postma and Van Schalkwyk above, if our education is to be a success, all stakeholders should play its part to the core without any compromise starting from the home, therefore, the role of the parents should not be less important in the formal education of their children and as such, mutual respect with equal responsibility should always come to the fore in the education of the children. Healthy school-community relationships help to reduce conflict and promote positive attitudes (Van der Westhuizen, 2015:415).

The researcher is of the view that the government, department of education, school community, parents and SGBs should work hand in glove to realise quality education in scarce subjects which is achievable if all stakeholders play their intended role in the education of a child of which ultimately the needs of the community at large will be addressed to satisfy the needs of such community. Supporting each other in a sound partnership is needed to achieve the common goal that could not be achieved by the legal structure alone in this regard but such initiatives should be led by the governors as the steering institution towards quality results.

2.2 Powers of governance and professional management in South African schools in terms of the Constitution

According to SASA 84 of 1996, Section 16(2) posits that a governing body has a trusting relationship with the school and Section 16(3) states that the professional management of a public school must be undertaken by the principal under the authority of the Head of Department, subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law. The School Act distinguishes between governance and professional management, assigning the former to the SGB and the latter to the senior management team (SMT) of the school (Naidu et al, 2008:154). The researcher believes that the mandate of the governors and administrators should be to complement each other in terms of sharing responsibility in the education of a child rather than competing for roles in the education system. According to SASA 84 of 1996, Section 19 (1) (a & b) provides a platform for the extensive training towards governors that is supposed to run continuously for the benefit of the governors to grasp the contents of SASA in relation to the functions of the governing bodies and clearly distinguish the professional role to be played by the principal of the school and the governing part assigned to the governors of which the two complement each other, it would be of utmost importance in taking our SGBs to another level by issuing them with competency certificate once they have completed such training so that they could perform their duties and take full accountability for the benefit of the school.

School governance is regarded as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled, which includes ensuring that such rules and policies are carried out effectively (Maile, 2002:1). This implies that the SGB, promoting the best interests of the school and, in particular, of learners, is responsible for developing a strategy for ensuring that quality education is provided for the learners (Fox, 2003) cited by Xaba (2004: 314). Study by Xaba (2004:314) cites that the SGB does this through monitoring and evaluating the implementation thereof. In other words, the SGB formulates a strategy for the achievement of the school's vision and mission whilst the principal and staff are responsible for the implementation thereof. The researcher posits that the roles of the two are clearly defined but could encounter challenge if the governors do not have the necessary skills to formulate those strategies for implementation by the principals and staff.

The governors with rudimentary skills could set-up different committees within the school to assist the implementation of the decisions agreed by the SGBs which have to be implemented by the school management teams as part of fulfill their constitutional duties. Important committees like finance & purchasing committee, fund-raising committee, recruitment committee, teaching and learning committee, performance & remedial committee and disciplinary committee should be in place to ensure that teaching and learning does take place effectively and efficiently at the school.

The studies by Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia (2016:2) cited Anderson-Butcher & Asthon (2004:40) posit collaboration that is described as "collaborating and sharing responsibility for outcomes." The principal has to work hand in hand with quality learning and teaching committee by ensuring that the educators are in class fulfilling their obligations on time once the whistle has been rung to show that it is time to be in class, vigorously teaching the learners as they were appointed to do by the department through the recommendations of the governance structure. The professional duties lie in the hands of the headmasters of such institutions but for realisation of the target set by the governance, the principals have to accommodate the implementation of the Quality Learning & Teaching Committee/Campaign (QLTC) in their schools through the initiatives of the governance. Together with the department should such committee be approved in existence in that school for the benefit of the learners in receiving quality teaching from amicable and conducive atmosphere (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:2). While the centrality of the principal in relationships within the school is acknowledged, the centrality of other individuals such as educators in relation to their peers, learners and parents is also important for the establishment of sound relationships (Naidu et al, 2008:120).

Research done by Van Schalkwyk (1990:116) emphasizes the fact that well-organized leadership is a prerequisite of parent involvement. As the administrative head of the school, the principal is often pivotal in establishing a management culture that values parental participation. Studies by NDP-2030 (2012:311) state that schools can be intimidating for many parents of learners in poor communities, there is an imbalance of power relations, parents often feel ill equipped to engage with teachers and school management about the performance of their children and the school as a whole. The researcher is of the view that it is always encouraged that the principals create conducive warmth welcoming environment to all stakeholders to ensure that each interested party fulfil its obligation in the education of the child because education is a societal issue that affects any citizen in the country who knows that the future of the country is in the quality of its education.

Study by Nash (2015:5) posits that governors are the main tactical deciders and broad idea crafters of every school. Study by Eysenck (1972) cited by April, Macdonald & Vriesendorp (2000:119) posits that the notion of rational man, acting in conformity with reason and knowledge and guided entirely by his brain, is erroneous, although still widespread and still governs many of our educational and social policies. Instead, much of human conduct is governed by heart rather than by head; by emotion, rather than by reason. The existence of governance plays a crucial duty in schools than when schools are at their own alone doing everything by themselves, as they would be expected to develop policies, adopt constitution and other functions than focusing on their primary professional matters which is to ensure that lively learning and teaching does happen at the school. Study by Sobuwa (2021:2) cites an alleged mismanagement of funds and corruption at JSM Setiloane Secondary School in Kroonstad, Free State, has led to the immediate resignation of all school governing members (SGB) members. This followed a three-year battle between the SGB members and the school principal, Victor Campher, whom they accused of failing to recognise them from the first day they were elected.

In order for school governing bodies to fulfil their mission, parents must be convoluted in all facets of their children's education (T'Alane:2014). Any structure found in the area where the school is located is responsible for education.

Communities may produce a nation capable of educating itself and prioritising the education of its offspring without fear, bias, or favour (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:4). As it has been evident through the findings, HoDs could use the support from the members of the communities where their schools are based. Such support may come in the form of parental involvement, but the involvement of the school governing body is also most necessary (Gamedze, 2015:177). The SGB has responsibility to foster and enhance the educational goals of the school. As governors of the school and parents' representatives, the onus is on the SGB members to promote and compliment the work of the educator. This means they must encourage students to learn and show high level of commitment to children's education through direct and indirect involvement in teaching (Quan-Baffour, 2006:41). The researcher believes that to have a working SGBs in our schools, the governors and the principals as well as educators should accept that they all need each other in order to teach a learner who is a child of parents who come from the community and their participation in the education of their children is paramount importance from an early stage.

The Department of Education has got two-fold of schools which are distinguished in terms of section 20 and/or 21 of SASA 84 of 1996; all schools under section 20 rely on provision from the Department when it comes to purchasing text books and other educational materials, whereas Section 21 schools have been granted powers by the Head of Department to purchase textbook, educational materials or equipment for the school. The functions of SGBs are divided into two compulsory functions that must be performed by all SGBs and optional functions these SGBs may perform if they have the requisite skills (Potgieter, Visser, Van Der Bank, Mothata & Squelch, 1997:35). The roles of all governing bodies in public schools are outlined in Section 20 of SASA 84 of 1996, where the school governing bodies are subject to this by carrying out the following functions:

- Promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school;
- Adopt a constitution;
- Develop the mission statement of the school;
- Adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school;
- Support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions;
- Determine times of the school day consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of staff at the school;
- Determine the admission policy of such school as the governing body;
- Determine the language policy of the school subject to the Republic of South Africa's Constitution;
- Administrate and manage the school's buildings, including land and grounds occupied by the school, including, if necessary, school hostels;
- Encourage parents, students, educators, and other members of the school community to volunteer at the school;
- Recommend the appointment of educators at the institution to the Head of Department, pursuant to the Employment of Educators Act of 1998 (Act No.76 of 1998) and the Labour Relations Act of 1995 (Act No.66 of 1995);
- Recommend the appointment of non-educator staff at the school to the Head of Department, pursuant to the Public Service Act of 1994 (Proclamation No.103 of 1994) and the Labour Relations Act of 1995. (Act No. 66 of 1995);
- A public school can establish posts for educators and non-educators to employ them in addition to the establishment determined by the Member of the Executive Council in terms of section 3(1) of the Educators' Employment Act, 1994, and the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No.103 of 1994), subject to this Act, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No.66 of 1995), and any other applicable law;
- A public school can only hire an educator in a position established under the Act if that educator is registered with the South African Council of Education;
- The governing body of a public school must include ample information of any positions envisaged in terms of subsections (4) and (5), including the projected costs relating to the jobs of workers in such posts and the manner in which such costs are proposed to be met, when presenting the annual budget contemplated in section 38 and others.

In terms of SASA 84 of 1996, Section 21(6), if a member of the Executive Council is satisfied that the governing bodies concerned have the capacity to perform such functions effectively, he or she may, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, determine that some governing bodies may exercise one or more functions without making the application contemplated in subsection (1), allocated functions which are as follows:

- (a) To maintain and improve the school's property, and buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels, if applicable;
- (b) To determine the extra-mural activities of the curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy;
- (c) To purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipment for the school;
- (d) To pay for services for the school;
- (e) Other functions consistent with this Act and any applicable provincial law.

Studies by Kruger, Du Plessis, Maseko, Cowan & Babedi (2002:10) cite that the principal must ensure that an appropriate provisioning scheme is in place in order to provide sufficient support for the teaching program. No school can function properly without desks, chalkboards, stationery and perhaps most of all, textbooks. My deduction to this sentiment is that in order to have effective learning and teaching at the school, the infrastructure provided by the Department of Education throughout the country should be of good quality to enable the smooth operations to take place at the school that will ultimately give the effective teaching and learning meaningful actions purported to offer quality education to the learners.

Planning related to textbooks should be done well in advance during the previous year and the number of books that will be needed should be established. If this action is postponed for too long, your school is sure to end up with a shortage of textbooks. A very senior teacher should be responsible for the administration of textbooks (Kruger et al, 2002; 10). My deduction based on the above narrative, it is very clear that in our education system, textbooks play a huge role to ensure that effective teaching and learning does take place in our schools, therefore, to have quality infrastructure and other education materials without having quality textbooks, the intended objective to offer quality education is unlikely to be realised.

SASA 84 of 1996, Section 21(1) (b) states that subject to this Act, a governing body with necessary capacity may apply to the Head of Department in writing to determine the extra-mural activities curriculum of the school and the choice of subjects' options in terms of provincial curriculum policy. The study by Kruger et al. (2002:6) states that in our new education dispensation there is a consensus that the school curriculum is not only the concern of the government and teachers, but also of parents and governing bodies. The role of the school curriculum also has an external dimension, for schools cannot ignore the fact that they have become much more open institutions than ever before. Schools and principals can no longer afford to isolate themselves from the lively and continuing debate that surrounds the school curriculum policy. It is concluded that aligning the curriculum was extremely frustrating in that while the HoDs were on top of the local needs of students, it was also clear that local curriculum decision-making could not take place effectively without external support from the school governing body (Gamedze, 2015:186).

The majority of governors believe that the SGB should be extensively trained to understand their role so that they can work within their boundaries rather than interfering with the School Management Team's delivery of the curriculum. However, few believe that the SMT should outline their targets and the SGB should interrogate and approve those plans before they are implemented in the school (Maluleke, Cassim & Karodia, 2016:34). The study by Kruger, Du Plessis, Maseko, Cowan & Babedi (2002:6) believes the school principal's new role will involve, in addition to the traditional role, working with communities and gaining cooperation from parents. It is the task of the school to realize the teaching and educational curriculum so that it satisfies the needs of the community in which the school is situated. Study by NDP-2030 (2012:314) underlines that leaders must engage with each other on a continuous basis and repeatedly re-affirm their commitments to the education pact, build consensus on the education pact, the pact must be meaningful to all education stakeholders and to all citizens. Monitor the pact at the school level; provide the school community with regular information so that local solutions can be found.

The study by Maluleke et al (2016:35) cites that the SGB has unrestricted power over the entire affairs of the school they govern, including the appointment and recommendation of all employees, so they have a legitimate right to hold everyone accountable in the school because they are all subjected to governance. However, the SGB should not be

seen as encroaching on the boundaries of management when fulfilling the curriculum, only when the curriculum is not being fulfilled. The governing bodies have a legal obligation to advise the principals of the principles that will be used to evaluate their results (Nash, 2015:79). "We take leadership of our schools very seriously. Evidence has shown that a good school is the one run by a good leader. The principal is a critical position we cannot leave to chance", Angie Motshekga said (Khumalo, 2011).

The Government funding of schools merely meets the basic needs of school, to be able to provide learners with quality teaching, it has become imperative to the parents' community and school-community to supplement the funds provided by the state (Kruger et al, 2002:49). Study by Van der Westhuizen (2015:409) argues that the question is not whether a school-community partnership should exist, but whether the current relationships can be strengthened for the sake of more efficient school teaching. The researcher is of the view that based on the undertakings above by both the Department and parents' community, such doings give them equal mandate to set the bar to be met by the schools and hold schools accountable in their assignment of implementing curriculum to the learners/children which is the primary tasks of all principals to see that quality education is provided to be realised as accounting officers in their respective schools.

3. Research methods

Ethics approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the Tshwane University of Technology. Participation in the study was voluntary. Standard ethical guidelines and principles were adhered to while conducting the study. Ethical approval was obtained for this research from the Research Ethics Committee of TUT. This was done through the supervisor of study. Research approval was secured before the study is implemented.

The design of study is descriptive and cross-sectional. Quantitative methods of data analyses will be used in the study mainly. According to Bryman (2015), a descriptive study design is suitable for an exploratory study of this kind. According to Maluleke (2014:48) and Terry (1977:179), a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analyses are appropriate for this kind of study. There are 65 educators, 28 School Governing Board members and 30 circuit officials (Thenga, 2014:19). Thus, the population size is 123. These 123 officials are working in 3 public schools and 1 independent school. These 4 schools are part of the Malamulele-West Circuit (Jim Yingwane High School and Mahlefunye Primary School) and the Malamulele Central Circuit (EPP Mhinga High School and Holy Rosary Catholic School, independent school). The four schools have 2,500 learners (Thenga, 2014:19). Thus, the population size of study was equal to 123. Data will be collected from each one of the 123 officials who are working in the 3 public schools and 1 independent school. As such, the sampling procedure will be a census (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013: 49-50).

A qualitative research method and a quantitative methods would prevail in this study though quantitative would be applied mainly in the study than qualitative method, people like School Governing Body members, school clerks, educators, principals, circuit officials and circuit managers, could be used to give information through tested means like interviews and Delphi technique method in a form of questionnaires as these people mentioned above have got good accounts for incidents which take place in their operation of control and all the above schools to be used do have different scenarios in terms of how the SGB has played their roles in improving the performance of their respective schools.

Quantitative research methodology being regarded as realism or positivism in uncovering the existing truth in explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods in particular statistics (Aliaga & Gunderson:2000). The results produced by different schools to be used in gathering data will explore this method in comparing the performance of those four schools in similar period since 2014 up to now in studying and analysing the pattern of how they performed in a decade. Data was then captured in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) then data analysis commenced (Bayat, Louw & Rena,2014:186).

Quantitative research design that was measurable, assessable and assessment based in terms of the results the schools have achieved within a certain period could be used as the tool to prove the performance of the school in this regard of which that will demonstrate if the SGB has managed to take out the school from poor performing to better performing state through its involvements and its strategies which have been inculcated by the school to produce the expected results.

Studies by Glicken (2003:1) argue that research may be regarded as a rational approach to problem solving. Research done by Creswell (2005:39) defines qualitative research as a type of educational research in which the researchers rely on the perspectives of participants: asking broad, general questions; collecting data consisting primarily of words from participants; describing and analysing these words for themes; and conducting the inquiry in a subject-based manner. Studies by Adler & Adler (1998) cited in Lee (1999:21) argues that a qualitative researcher’s participation can vary from direct involvement to hands-off observation, and a combination of qualitative questionnaires.

Qualitative research design that is exploratory, descriptive and contextual would take place in this research project. Qualitative research was primary concerned with the view that individuals interacting with the social world construct reality. Quality researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed in making sense of the world and the experiences they have in it (Merriam, 1998:6). This method is regarded as subjectivism as its beliefs that there is no definite truth in pragmatic philosophy, truth is constantly changing and being updated through the process of human problem solving by applying open-ended questionnaires, interviews and discourse analysis.

The professionalism and privacy of the participants will always play a major role in this study under way, so that it does not look like is a sabotage or exposure to some who may participate in this research which is being undertaken in front of their field of operations as headmasters, managers, governors, educators, non-teaching staff and wide community. The anonymity of the participants will be respected throughout the entire research study without any compromise or favour or prejudice in compliance to the principles of conducting fair research but only school A, B, C and D could be used in place of the school names instead. Professionals (principals and teachers) who will be represented by A1, A2, A3 of which governors (chairpersons and other SGB members) will be represented by B1, B2, B3, B4 and C1, C2, C3 like that will represent circuit officials in the study in order to give participants more meaning in the study that was undertaken for the benefits of the large society, the Department of Education and other institutions.

4. 1 Interaction with respondents

Elections for positions in School Governing Bodies are announced to the general public:

Educator		School Governing Bodies		Circuit Office Official	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
98%	2%	100%	0%	90%	10%

Educator A1; *“Yes, the school invites people or parents from the community through letters”.*

Governor B1; *“Yes, the department of education does make an announcement through media e.g radio etc. In schools they give learners the letters to inform parent and guardians”.*

Circuit Official C1; *“Yes, principals of schools commonly give learners letters of the invitation for the election.”*

Members of School Governing Bodies should be assessed for professional integrity:

Educator		School Governing Bodies		Circuit Office Official	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
84%	16%	85%	15%	80%	20%

Educator A1; *“Yes, for effective running of the school, the school needs all assigned individuals to be professional at all times.”*

Educator A2; *“Yes, it minimizes unnecessary problems at school; unscrupulous members take bribes and use funds allocated to schools for their personal gains. Corrupt SGBs may recommend wrong candidates for employment at school.”*

Governor B1; *“Yes, SGB represent the image of the school.”*

Governor B2; *“Yes, it is important for member to be assessed in order to get quality and professionalism.”*

Circuit Official C1; “Yes, this is done to verify their competence.”

Educators must make the time to meet with parents at least once in a school term:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	0	0	11	16	0	1	2	24	31	0	0	5	8	7
0	0	0	41%	59%	0	2%	3%	41%	53%	0	0	25%	40%	35%
100%					100%					100%				

Members of the local communities are actively encouraged to take part in school activities:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	1	14	10	1	10	2	23	22	1	1	6	10	2
4%	4%	4%	51%	37%	2%	17%	3%	40%	38%	5%	5%	30%	50%	10%
100%					100%					100%				

4.2 Overall report of the respondents

Table 4.1 The overall analysis of 8 questionnaires which need the response “Yes” or “No” in a form of percentage provided herein after the completion of the questionnaires:

The overall participants in terms of the expectation were 123 composed by school governing bodies members, educators and circuit officials. Out of 65 expected participants from professionals only 58 of them participated, out of 28 number given for governors only 27 participated from governors and from 30 expected circuit officials only 20 of them participated as follows herein below; whereby the study proves that 66% of the participants out of forty questionnaires completed approve the role of the governors as paramount important in effective teaching and learning in Vhembe District schools of which 34% do not support such views; school governing bodies 70%, educators 72% and circuit officials 56%:

1. Election for positions in School Governing Bodies are announced to the general public:																													
School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official																			
Yes					No					Yes					No														
100%					0%					98%					2%					90%					10%				
2. Members of School Governing Bodies should be assessed for professional integrity:																													
School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official																			
Yes			No		Yes			No		Yes			No																
93%			7%		84%			16		85%			15%																
3. Members of School Governing Bodies should be assessed for suitability based on past track:																													
School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official																			
Yes					No					Yes					No														
93%					7%					84%					16%					85%					15%				
4. The Department of Education provides enough support to School Governing Bodies so that they can implement decisions taken:																													
School Governing Bodies					School Governing Bodies					Circuit Office Official																			
Yes					No					Yes					No														
89%					11%					90%					10%					85%					15%				
5. The school appreciates constructive comments and suggestions made by parents of pupil:																													
Educator					School Governing Bodies					Circuit Office Official																			
Yes					No					Yes					No														
95%					5%					100%					0%					80%					20%				

6. The school appreciates constructive comments and suggestions made by legal guardians of pupils:						
School Governing Bodies		Educator			Circuit Office Official	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
100%	0%	93%	7%	75%	25%	

7. All allegations of misconduct are duly investigated:						
School Governing Bodies		Educator			Circuit Office Official	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
85%	15%	91%	9%	75%	25%	

Figure 4.1 Analysis of respondents for the questionnaires above with their sequence from number 1 to number 8:

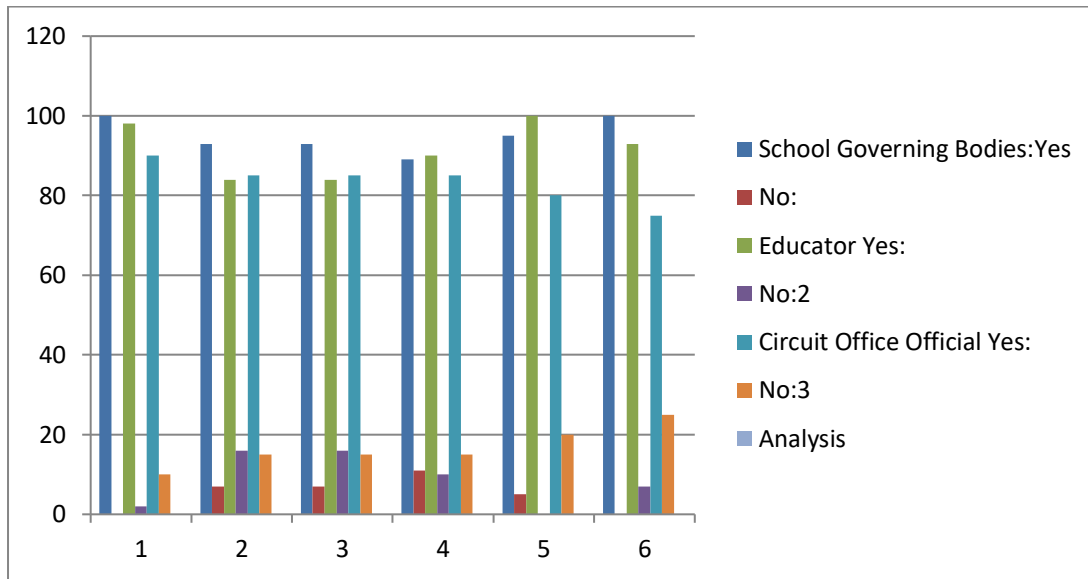


Table 4.2 The overall analysis of 32 statements based on a 5-point ordinal scale; 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-not sure, 4-agree and 5-strongly agree:

The whole summary of how participants performed in terms of these questionnaires not outlined in terms of their sequence from the used questionnaires:

1. Members of School Governing Bodies should be assessed for competence in management and leadership qualities:														
School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	3	0	15	9	0	9	1	31	17	0	2	5	6	7
0	11	0	56	33	0	16	2	53	29	0	10	25	30	35
100%					100%					100%				

2. Parents must be allowed to sit on the SGBs of public and private institutions in Vhembe District:														
School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	0	1	17	9	1	1	5	22	29	1	1	6	10	2
0	0	4%	63%	33%	2%	2%	8%	38%	50%	5%	5%	30%	50%	10%
100%					100%					100%				

3. Legal guardians must be allowed to sit on the SGBs of public and private institutions in Vhembe District:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	0	2	15	10	2	2	6	23	25	0	1	6	10	3
0	0	7%	56%	37%	3%	3%	10%	40%	43%	0	5%	30%	50%	15%
100%					100%					100%				

4. Textbooks are provided to pupils at the right time in Vhembe District public and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2	9	5	7	4	5	12	15	18	8	2	3	7	6	2
7	33	19	26	15	9	20	26	31	14	10	15	35	30	10
100%					100%					100%				

5. Department Heads assist educators who need training in order to improve their level of teaching skills:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	5	12	8	1	20	5	20	12	3	1	6	9	1
4	4	19	44	30	2	34	9	34	21	15	5	30	45	5
100%					100%					100%				

6. Department Heads assist educators who need professional counselling services:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	9	9	7	0	21	8	17	11	2	1	10	5	2
4	4	33	33	26	0	36	14	29	19	10	5	50	25	10
100%					100%					100%				

7. School Governing Bodies (SGBs) members must be trained on the basic principles of good governance on a regular basis:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	5	12	7	0	2	1	38	17	3	1	6	9	1
4	4	19	44	26	0	3	2	66	29	15	5	30	45	5
100%					100%					100%				

8. Department Heads uplift the morale of educators so that they are productive and happy at the workplace:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	4	12	8	0	14	4	26	14	1	1	9	7	2
4	7	15	44	30	0	24	7	45	24	5	5	45	35	10
100%					100%					100%				

9. Enough respect and appreciation are provided to educators who work hard:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

0	2	3	7	15	0	14	1	29	14	2	1	6	7	4
0	7	11	26	56	0	24	2	50	24	10	5	30	35	20
100%					100%					100%				

10. Awards are given to educators who improve pass rates:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2	1	2	8	14	3	9	8	17	21	2	0	6	6	6
7	4	7	30	52	5	16	14	29	36	10	0	30	30	30
100%					100%					100%				

11. Educators are punctual at the workplace in Vhembe District public schools and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	3	6	12	5	1	5	16	24	12	1	1	11	5	2
4	11	22	44	19	2	9	28	41	21	5	5	55	25	10
100%					100%					100%				

12. Classes begin punctual in Vhembe District public schools and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	0	4	15	7	0	6	11	28	13	0	0	9	8	3
4	0	15	55	26	0	10	19	48	23	0	0	45	40	15
100%					100%					100%				

13. Classes end punctually in Vhembe District public schools and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	1	4	16	6	1	5	9	28	15	0	1	10	7	2
0	4	15	59	22	2	9	15	48	26	0	5	50	35	10
100%					100%					100%				

14. The number of educators working in Vhembe District public schools and independent schools is enough:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3	2	13	5	4	9	7	10	16	16	2	1	9	5	3
11	7	48	19	15	15	12	17	28	28	10	5	45	25	15
100%					100%					100%				

15. There is enough number of suitably qualified educators working in Vhembe District public and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2	6	8	7	4	9	8	17	19	5	3	1	8	5	3
7	22	30	26	15	15	14	29	33	9	15	5	40	25	15
100%					100%					100%				

16. There are enough textbooks for all pupils in Vhembe District public schools and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3	11	3	7	3	11	16	13	13	5	2	2	7	8	1
11	41	11	26	11	19	28	22	22	9	10	10	35	40	5
100%					100%					100%				

17. The quality of teaching mathematics subjects and science subjects to pupils in public schools is good enough compared to independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2	1	4	12	8	6	11	21	12	8	3	0	7	8	2
7	4	15	44	30	10	19	36	21	14	15	0	35	40	10
100%					100%					100%				

18. Educators use up-to-date lesson plans for teaching in Vhembe District and lesson plans used by educators are checked regularly on a weekly basis in Vhembe District:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	4	16	4	1	9	10	28	10	2	0	11	5	2
4	7	15	59	15	2	16	17	48	17	10	0	55	25	10
100%					100%					100%				

19. Homework, assignments and tests are marked regularly in Vhembe District public schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	1	4	16	6	0	2	9	32	15	0	1	10	4	5
0	4	15	59	22	0	3	16	55	26	0	5	50	20	25
100%					100%					100%				

20. Feedback is provided to homework, assignments and tests promptly:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	1	2	18	6	1	1	8	35	13	1	0	9	7	3
0	4	7	67	22	2	2	14	60	22	5	0	45	35	15
100%					100%					100%				

21. There is due respect for objectivity in all decisions taken in public schools and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	1	17	6	0	8	15	24	11	2	1	7	9	1
4	7	4	63	22	0	14	26	41	19	10	5	35	45	5
100%					100%					100%				

22. There is due respect for due process and fairness in all decisions taken in public schools and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	5	13	7	0	8	15	25	10	1	0	8	8	3
4	4	19	48	26	0	14	26	43	17	5	0	40	40	15
100%					100%					100%				

23. Pupils are encouraged to complain to principals about wrong treatment:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	2	6	11	8	2	14	4	25	13	2	1	9	6	2
0	7%	22%	41%	30%	3%	24%	7%	43%	23%	10%	5%	45%	30%	10%
100%					100%					100%				

24. The finances of public schools are audited regularly:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	0	6	11	9	2	8	6	15	28	1	2	6	7	4
4%	0	22%	41%	33%	3%	14%	10%	25%	48%	5%	10%	30%	35%	20%
100%					100%					100%				

25. The finances of public schools are managed efficiently compared to independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	4	9	9	4	1	8	23	13	13	2	3	6	8	1
4%	15%	33%	33%	15%	2%	14%	40%	22%	22%	10%	15%	30%	40%	5%
100%					100%					100%				

26. The working relationship between public schools, independent and local communities is good enough:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	2	6	11	8	0	9	9	25	15	2	1	7	8	2
0	7%	22%	41%	30%	0	16%	16%	43%	25%	10%	5%	35%	40%	10%
100%					100%					100%				

27. Members of SGBs and SMTs work in harmony and respect with each other:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	1	1	12	13	1	8	5	19	25	1	0	5	8	6
0	4%	4%	44%	48%	2%	14%	8%	33%	43%	5%	0	25%	40%	30%
100%					100%					100%				

28. Members of the local communities are actively encouraged to take part in school activities:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	1	14	10	1	10	2	23	22	1	1	6	10	2
4%	4%	4%	51%	37%	2%	17%	3%	40%	38%	5%	5%	30%	50%	10%
100%					100%					100%				

29. Educators must make the time to meet with parents at least once in a school term:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	0	0	11	16	0	1	2	24	31	0	0	5	8	7
0	0	0	41%	59%	0	2%	3%	41%	53%	0	0	25%	40%	35%
100%					100%					100%				

30. Educators must make the time to meet with legal guardians of pupils at least once in a school term:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	0	0	12	15	0	2	5	27	24	1	0	5	10	4
0	0	0	44%	56%	0	3%	9%	47%	41%	5%	0%	25%	50%	20%
100%					100%					100%				

31. Lesson plans used by educators are checked regularly on a weekly basis in Vhembe District public schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	11	11	3	1	10	13	27	7	1	0	10	8	1
4%	3%	41%	41%	11%	2%	17%	22%	47%	12%	5%	0	50%	40%	5%
100%					100%					100%				

32. There is due respect for accountability, transparency, rules and regulations in all decisions taken in public schools and independent schools:

School Governing Bodies					Educator					Circuit Office Official				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
0	2	4	13	8	1	6	10	28	13	2	0	8	8	2
0	7%	15%	48%	30%	2%	11%	17%	48%	22%	10%	0	40%	40%	10%
100%					100%					100%				

5. 1 Findings: Recommendations and Conclusion

The previous chapter has outlined the views the principals and governors as well as experts have in terms of sound governance and administration which lead to attainment of quality results at schools. The duty of the SGBs in the operations of our schools could not be ignored by any institution which likes to build a healthy sound educational institution which serves the needs of the community where it has been established and take the responsibility in educating the whole community so that they may support confidently to the economy of the country, the schools with the competent SGBs have got potential to turn things from worse to good as long they are able to utilise the powers invested upon them by the constitution properly to benefit pupils and all parties involved when running schools should play its part accordingly in terms of the applicable laws documented down in SASA 84 of 1996, S16(1).

Different views came out from people who are responsible with governance and administration in schools in which they put their efforts to ensure that teaching and learning does happen in classroom for the benefit of the learners. As statutory bodies, these governing bodies ensure the participation of parents, educators and other staff members, principals, learners and co-opted members of public schools in South Africa (Beckmann and Blom, 2000:1). It was emphasized by the governors in this study that positive results could be achieved if all the components which form core part of the structure work together within their legal operation of their boundaries as democratically elected governance structures, without deliberately excluding other components in decision-making, improved and sustained performance could be achieved and they stand to account to the state, parents and the school community for the performance of the school of which public funds they manage as governance of school form fundamental part of their mandate.

Study conducted by Anderson & Lumby (2005:34) states that parents' views should be seen as significant in determining how the school's financial resources are managed. The funds do assist all schools to have ample resources like infrastructure, chairs, photocopy machines, chalks, desks, computers and Learner-Teacher Support-Materials (LTSM) which do make things easy for conducive learning and teaching for both learners and educators. Any school could produce intended results if enough raw materials to be used to transform the intended products are available in stock when wanted, so in this case if LTSM are purchased on time and competent teachers are hired alongside ample support staff the intended results could be produced. The best practice should go with incentives and awards as a means to reward outstanding work done at the school by the staff; all this needs sound governance and sound administration to handle finances of the school to achieve the set goals, mostly the SGBs are measured in how best they can able to manage finances effectively for the benefit of the school as well as to contribute some funds to supplement the available funds in order to ensure that the school is well equipped to perform its primary tasks of effective teaching and learning.

Teachers should track their students' progress in each subject as part of their regular teaching routine (Nash, 2015:60). This will have an impact on the school's overall performance if teachers find it a priority to complete this mission effectively without failing to assess and include all concerned stakeholders in the process if the outcomes are not as planned in terms of the goal set by the responsible authority, the SGB and the department of education. Monitoring and evaluation are done after some written tasks have been administered in that term in order to assess if the objectives have been achieved, this starts from the subject teacher to the school management team before it could be submitted to the governance and district for their analysis too and necessary support be provided if the set standard is not met in that given period. The school managers as the answerable officers should be the first people to detect if there is no effective teaching and learning at the school and take necessary measures to ensure compliance of observing 7 working hours in a day in terms of educators' employment act.

To manage staff effectively in an enabling environment, a principal needs knowledge of school staffing establishment, conditions of service and related labour relations matters (Van Deventer, 2016:39). The development of IQMS has attempted to alleviate some of this negativity through a process that combines self-appraisal, negotiation, the involvement of peers, openness and transparency. Study by Middlewood (2003:131) advises that school principals can overcome such obstacles as mistrust by ensuring that performance appraisal in the school is procedurally sound, consistently applied and fair. This can be accomplishment by demonstrating that appraisal is not to be feared and that it can contribute to the aspirations of both individuals and the school (Naidu et al, 2008:105). Based on the outstanding performance one has produced the principal can recommend for incentives to the SGB and the department for their consideration. The SGB should be able to hold the principal accountable in the same manner as the department as the accounting officer of the institution in whatever target the school has set and provide necessary support in case the goal is not achieved.

As a result, governing bodies cannot afford to be amateurs in their roles, even though they are currently made up of volunteers. They must be held responsible for their effectiveness, and their shortcomings should be changed for the good of the children (Nash, 2015:17). Competency and skills of the governors are paramount importance in carrying out their constitutional obligations for the benefit of the children as to know when to measure the school performance in terms of the set target for the whole school in a given period and what should be done if the intended goals are not being achieved or could not be realized. In addition, ignorance and incapacity to perform certain functions tend to cause governing bodies to function only as crisis committees (Karlsson, Mcpherson & Pampallis, 2001:169). They should be in possession of the skills to establish committees which may make things happen at the school and ensure that these committees do report back to the SGB which will also report back to the major stakeholders. The management team made clear that if the school were to improve, then ways to measure progress had to be found (Wolfendale & Bastianti, 2000:103).

This system of governance has been in place in some countries before it was adopted in our country, South Africa and the studies undertaken in this aspect argue that so far is only the best mechanism to bring the two together in an education of a child, whilst they are two working together in different roles to shape one learner the benefits have been great. The Tanzanian proverb cites that the two ants do not fail to pull one grasshopper, the same in this system, the teacher and the parent could not fail to educate the child, the department and the school community could not fail to teach the society; the two has to work together and give each other equal respect in order to achieve the intended mission of the concept. While SGBs in South Africa were only legislated in 1996 and first implemented in

1997(Mncube 2007), they were already in existence in Wales and England as early as in the 1980 (Farrell and Law 1999) cited by Mncube & Mafora (2013:15).

Countless school governing body members from townships and rural schools (disadvantaged areas) lack skills due to socio-economic challenges of our country such lead to “negative attitudes towards school activities” (Heystek & Louw, 1999:21). So far this system has been doing well in schools in terms of the views expressed by governors in this study who support this system in place though some governors are of the view that minimum academic requirement should be included as these governors are to handle educational matters that has got financial aspects on it in their constitutional obligations rather than being a parent or being elected as governor by virtue of being a guardian or parent of a child attending in that school some form of education should be in possession of by oneself to enable him or her to perform primary tasks with diligence. In South Africa SGBs, parents are required by law to form the majority on SGBs, with the chair of the SGB being one of such (Mncube 2007; Mncube et al.2011). This was an attempt to give power and value to parents as a way in which issues of democracy and social justice issues can be advanced in a country that was fraught with racism, oppression and authoritarianism (Mncube & Mafora, 2013:15).

Voluntarily work undertaken by the governors is of paramount importance in our schools and in the system but it is a time now to revisit the success and consequences of such voluntarily undertaking to benefit the school as well as the country at large. The skilled governors could be elected to serve in the SGBs if the current legislation in respect of non-compensation of the services rendered are reviewed in order to have a pool of skilled parents to serve in the SGBs for the benefit of the system and school so that they may be held liable and accountable knowing that it is not a voluntarily work without any compensation that they are performing but is the assigned duties with honorarium in those meetings held as stipulated in terms of the law. Paying school governing bodies for their position as governors is subject to very clear legal restrictions, according to Nash (2015:111). The payment may only be used to cover expenses incurred in order for the individual to act solely as a governor. Individuals serving as governors can only accept compensation from their school under restricted, unique circumstances. This can, however, only happen when it is in the best interests of the school.

5.2 Recommendations

The literature review analysis and findings from governors in this study warrants the department of education to consider the following recommendations in the opinion of the researcher in order to take South African education system to another level so that it could be comparable to the world class basic education:

- The security of the schools should be given a lot of considerations at this stage considering the latest incidents wherein teachers and learners are no longer safe when embarking in teaching and learning in a daily basis and this warrants the department of education at national level to establish strong partnership with law enforcement agencies in the country in order to curb this unfashionable trend in our schools. In order to get our system working, our circuit offices have to work together with police stations whereby police stations should assign relief commanders to adopt the schools in their respective clusters so that they can be able to give support to the principals and security personnel hired at respective schools so whenever there is an emergency to be attended it is known who is to be contacted for help and necessary action thereof. School safety committees should be established with the inclusion of the police officers amongst them in order to deal with violence, intimidation, bullying, gangsterism, rape, sexual assaults, random searches and seizures on school premises.

Police visibility in our schools plays a huge part in the minds of the learners and the teachers as that gives them hope and believe that they are safe in the environment whilst embarking on teaching and learning responsibilities. School infrastructure should include metal detectors, burglar proofing, alarms, cctv features and security fences in order to ensure that effective teaching and learning does take place in a safe environment, and these also have an impact in the minds of the learners and the staff that their safety is guaranteed. Police officers, inmates under parole and magistrates should be encouraged to give motivational and inspiring messages once off in a month in morning assemblies to raise awareness of crime, gangsterism, drugs, violence, intimidation and bullying at schools in order to give the learners the insights and consequences of unruly behaviour whilst still young.

Full-time social workers in township and remote rural schools should be hired to assist the teachers and SGBs to deal with social disruptions in classrooms in order to ensure that teaching and learning do happen without a maximum disruptions which might be the case in most of our schools if such kind of misconduct takes place teachers will have to leave a classroom to attend that learner, so when the school employed social worker the culprit will be referred to such section for further counselling and mentoring in a way to instill discipline and morals of the said school in terms of code of conduct of that school.

- The department should make it a policy to campaign at parents' meetings and community gatherings by parents' community who intend to stand for elections in their schools so that those who are to elect them understand what they stand for in the education of the society and their children, by so doing their profiles will be assessed by all parents who will vote them into governance of their schools. It is always encouraged that members who are available for nominations are better equipped to handle finances and develop policies of the school and as such have some level of rudimentary education to understand the concepts which they will be exposed to for the period of three years.

There are three seats of bureau holders, they are considered as central points in the functioning of the school governing bodies and should be occupied by the parents with academic education above grade 12 and this could be realised if the open campaign and lobbying are made the policy or additional requirements are made on the three positions to confirm that the school is governed professional to the right direction by governors who are competent enough to make well informed decisions on educational matters for the benefit of the learners.

These positions have got a term of office which may not exceed one year in a cycle of three years in terms of SASA 84 of 1996, S31(3&4) and therefore the office-bearer of a governing body may be re-elected or co-opted, as the case may be, after the expiry of the term of office or the members be rotated on those positions amongst themselves to avoid regression of some sorts in governance of the school, it is a painful fact that interpretation and developing the policies of the school needs someone to be in possession of certain level of rudimentary education to grasp the functions to be performed by the democratically elected governing body of the school and as such capacity and skills of the members are vital importance for considerations when nominations and elections are conducted.

- The department of education and governing bodies associations should make sure that the level of training to the governors in public schools and independent schools is improved by ensuring that effective training is continuous as stipulated in SASA 84 of 1996, Section 19 (1)(a & b) in order to capacitate them in executing their roles so that they could able to perform their functions effectively and consider issuing them with certificate of competency after completing the program of training designed in that particular period by which in principle will be to professionalize the structure. The department of education and governing bodies associations should consider writing all the training materials in all official languages of the country for easy usage by those who are less educated.

The SGB members should be trained vigorously on their whole mandate of governance including to recommend and appoint personnel at the school in terms of SASA 84 of 1996, S20(1)(i & j) & S20(4 & 5) in order to understand the policies and circulars on conversion of educators post from temporary to permanent to help against manipulation of positions and power by accounting officers, this may help in securing and keeping of good personnel in schools especially educators than having to lose them because SGB members as governors do not understand and sometimes not aware that it falls under their scope of mandate to advertise, appoint, recommend and dismiss but only rely on information provided by accounting officers who may sometimes abuse their mandate that has been delegated to them by the Head of Department in terms of SASA 84 of 1996, S16(3) and disadvantage good personnel.

These trainings should be facilitated by experts like department officials working at governance sections and the governing bodies associations co-coordinators, the principals and circuit managers must ensure that the governors are provided with these trainings and necessary documents or booklets of governance so that they could be able to perform their functions without any compromise. Neutral body like National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) was supposed to be tasked with this undertaking to strike a balance between

the department and SGBs in order to avoid the partiality by some department officials and principals when training the governors who are in return after these trainings are to govern the same schools which are managed by the same principals. That could minimize the abuse of power from the accounting officers who sometimes conceal information when assisting the governors to perform their constitutional obligations.

- It is recommended that to have well-informed governors in our schools. The associations of school governing bodies in their current state do not play this role effectively in Vhembe District where several cases of abuse of power by the principals and chairpersons are reported to them but no active action is taken to halt such ultravires by some members of the SGBs. So to professionalise this legal structure to be on the same level with university boards, rethinking strategy should be developed by these associations in such provinces and districts in order to help the school governing bodies to perform its constitutional mandate in a conducive space with necessary skills as expected by the law according to South African Schools Act No.84 of 1996, Section 19 (1)(A & B).

Some of envisaged strategies that could be adopted by associations in different provinces have been outlined for consideration; encourage affiliations by the school governing bodies to their associations as a means to raise funds to be used to train them vigorously and attend to their concerns raised with the department without any action taken; establishing offices in each district to attend to the pertinent concerns affecting the operations of school governing bodies in that district like offering continuous trainings in their mother tongue twice in a year in a form of workshops and addressing their failed concerns by the department within a normal acceptable period not beyond three months; issuing of competency certificates after a certain period of offering these trainings to members of school governing bodies could be another source of recognition and appreciation on the work done by the school governing bodies.

Making public awareness about their roles in each district so that the parent community and school community could be able to know their services so that if the SGB members engage themselves in corrupt practices or do not perform their constitutional obligations as expected in terms of the law could be reported to them for their urgent intervention in order to lessen the burden of flooded state school complaints reported to Corruption Watch for their further processing. The training of school governing bodies and addressing their concerns should be outsourced to the school governing bodies associations and NECT working together on the same page with the department in order to strike the balance between the two institutions to effect effective governance and administration at schools that should champion extant learning and teaching in our schools.

It is recommended that civic organizations should form a structure that deals specifically with the ignorance and failures by the Department of Basic Education in nine provinces after all avenues have been exposed within a period of three months. Cases of corruption, abuse of power by principals and chairpersons of SGBs, extra-ordinary relations between teachers and pupils, discrimination and unfair labour practice purported by SGB members should be reported to the department concern at the circuit and district level whereby within a period of fourteen days the matter should have been addressed. If the matter is not being attended to as expected on that level now it could be escalated to the provincial office and the governing bodies associations for their intervention up to the level of national level. Failure to address the case reported within the period of three months by the department the structure formed by civic organizations championing the interest of quality education in the country which include amongst others Corruption Watch, Section 27, Equal Education, governing bodies associations, Right to Know Movement, De Loitte, OUTA, NECT and SANCO should be assigned to assist in bringing efficiency that we aspire to have in our education sector by holding the minister accountable in her constitutional obligation.

This structure should be known as external body guarding the interest of basic education in South Africa in order to have the most competitive comparable education system to the global community which responds to the needs of its citizenries throughout the country by compelling the department of education to fulfill its constitutional obligation and should be composed by members of these organisations mentioned above thereby each organisation should nominate one member to serve in this structure of our education to profit it and society at large as a non-profit organisation formed to deal decisively with none-compliance of the department of education through other avenues including the legal route.

- The Department of Basic Education should ensure that provisions of infrastructure and facilities in terms of National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, Section 3(4)(c) & (g) are provided to our schools by the provincial department of education concerned in all nine provinces of the country as outlined by SASSA 84 of 1996, Section 12(1) & Section 34(1) particularly in townships schools and remote rural schools so that conducive learning and teaching could happen under a welcoming environment like the way it is at suburban schools of our country.

To have a meaningful teaching and learning in our schools could only happen when and only if the department is able to carry out this function diligently so in terms of SASSA 84 of 1996, Section 5A which states that norms and standards for basic infrastructure and capacity in public schools- (1) the minister may, after consultation with the Minister of Finance and the Council of Education Ministers, by regulation prescribe minimum uniform norms and standards for:

- (a) School infrastructure;
- (b) Capacity of a school in respect of the number of learners a school can admit; and
- (c) The provision of learning and teaching support material.

The inequalities and injustices happened during apartheid government need a serious undertaking to be redressed by our government and the department of education in our townships schools and rural schools as the Supreme Court of appeal ruled on Michael Komape's case in favour of him subsequent to Polokwane High Court's ruling alongside Eastern Cape High Court ruled that infrastructure should be prioritized by the department of education to realize basic human rights of learners to accessible education through reasonable measures available in order to ensure effective learning and teaching could take place in a conducive and safe environment.

The delivery of enough textbooks in time in Vhembe District should be given a priority because such does compromise effective teaching and learning in terms of responses obtained from the participants.

- The SGB should monitor and evaluate the targets that have been set at the school level for each grade in a quarterly basis and provide necessary support at an early discovery. Monitoring and evaluation of education is the responsibility of the national department with competent authorities like school governing bodies and others in terms of National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, section 8(4). Teachers and the support staff members should be subjected to performance agreement so that they could be undertaken to a meaningful appraisal measures with intention to commend the good work done and improve the failures in order to get the intended quality results throughout the year, the governors and the principals should ensure that the performance appraisal in the school is procedurally sound, consistently applied and fair, the outstanding performers should be entitled to promotion and rewards. The SGBs as the overall employer of the accounting officer and every employee at the schools should make sure that the monitoring and evaluation processes are applied across the board in order to get the intended results as agreed by all affected parties for the benefit of the learners without any compromise.

The department of education should uplift the morale of the educators and retain the best educators by implementing the good working conditions in the workplace completely as documented on Education Labour Relations Council(ELRC) that has been established in terms of Labour Relations Act of 1995 as amended, Collective Agreement (CA) number 1 of 2008 (2008:6) which states that teaching and learning specialist, i.e. a general classroom educator who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and performance measured in terms of IQMS in a teaching phase, learning area or subject and who has a REQV 15 qualification. Further than that ELRC, CA No.1 of 2008 (2008:7) states that the school development team (SDT) will motivate and recommend a candidate for upgrading, taking into account such candidate's IQMS results and the school based evaluation for two years consecutively; (2008:2) cites that this agreement applies to and binds the employer, and all the employees of the employer as defined in the Employment of Educators Act, 1998, whether such employees are members of trade union parties to this agreement or not.

The implementation Collective Agreement number 1 of 2008 fully will ensure that the schools are managed by competent managers who happened to be managers by virtue of interests, skills and capabilities not

because he or she wanted to be promoted to the next level in the profession; this resolution will keep the highly skillful educators in the classroom rather than aspiring to venture into school management positions for the sake of promotion though their interests, passions, dedications and affections are solely in the classroom as of now the department prioritize/s only the school management promotions than general classroom advancements. To avoid and minimize exodus of the skillful educators with scarce skills from the system the department of education should prioritize growth of educators in the teaching fraternity in order to sustain quality results. If this is not done by the department at their own goodwill the unions should compel the department to implement the agreement without any further delay in order to retain the required skills in the teaching fraternity.

- The Department of Education should urgently address the need of Mathematics teachers at GET Band especial at grade 9; re-training of Mathematics teachers should be reviewed in order to meet the national expectations as the results from all schools used in the study show that learners are performing well at grade 7 at primary level up to grade 8 but when they go to grade 9 the bar drops drastically and that has a huge influence on learners opting for Mathematical Literacy at grade 10. Incentive specifically for Mathematics teachers at grade 9 should be introduced to stimulate the morale of Mathematics teachers teaching at this grade. Workshops and vigorous trainings could help also but without considering the benefits that are attributed to teachers who are doing extremely well at grade 9 could have a minimum impact.

The results and other studies have shown that the department have tried to introduce CTA and ANA but all seem to have failed to improve the quality of Mathematics at grade 9 and as such another strategy should be implemented as proposed below: incentivising outstanding performance annually throughout the country at grade 9 from the teachers who are teaching Mathematics, re-training Mathematics teachers in a form of advanced education in Mathematics through the department of education bursaries at higher education and training institutions, channelling enough resources to Mathematics lessons through LTSM, quarterly workshops in circuits and districts could make a huge impact and hiring Mathematics teachers at a better minimum notch than these other educators' fields to show its importance as scarce field in the country in order to make Mathematics and Science fashionable through OSD so that it could able to attract the best candidates in market to join the profession and bring the necessary change wanted in the fraternity.

The researcher recommends that this commitment should be accompanied by a certification of some sort at grade 9 as exit point to learners who will aspire to follow vocational studies at Technical and Vocational Education Training. This certificate should be used as a minimum requirement at Technical and Vocational Education Training where students should venture for skills and knowledge wanted highly at the labour market in South African markets in order to get economy growing at the faster pace than the way it is at the moment. The academic route should be pursued by those who will contribute positively knowledgeable to the economy of the country for instance lawyers, doctors, lecturers, teachers, accountants, social workers, philosophers, psychologists and others.

The researcher also recommends the involvement of all role players (organized labour, academics on that field, department of basic education, organized associations of school governing bodies, concerned departments in that learning area for instance PANSAB and African Language experts when is African languages or SAPS when is policing qualification, department of higher education and training, council on higher education and relevant bodies overseeing the quality of such learning area in the county) in the curriculum contents design and integration between the department of basic education where teaching and learning does take place and the Department of Higher Education and Training which is responsible for training teachers through public and private institutions in the country for uniform and easy implementation of the curriculum in both departments to achieve the common intended goal which is to prepare the learners after school and to prepare them for university undertaking as well as to get the South African economy growing to benefit everyone in the country.

- The governing bodies and the department of education should consider making use of SASA 84 of 1996, section 36(1) and section 38(2) as well as section 35 as set out in schedule 49 & 51 for national norms and standards for school funding to receive contributions from parents community and other stakeholders in order to finance extra classes for Mathematics, Science Education and other challenging subjects in the

school, to compensate the expenses incurred by the experts outsourced to teach these learning areas, to recognize the good performance by the teachers and support staff through some forms of awards, i.e. trophies, recognition certificates, cash bonus, special outings and others.

The governing bodies and department of education should assess the standard of freely services from governors according to SASA 84 of 1996, §27(2) in favour of reimbursement in terms of SASA 84 of 1996, §27(1) for expenses and time consumed for rendering the stipulated SGB meetings once in a term whereby minutes for such meeting to be kept for inspection by the Head of Department in terms of SASA 84 of 1996, §18(2)(d). Those other urgent meetings falling outside this provision should be under voluntarily services which form part and parcel of the services expected to be provided by the governors in order to get the schools running effectively.

The SGB should provide parents with school performance report and all interested parties for accountability and effect transparency through different means as a way to report back to shareholders and stakeholders who invested their trust of the school upon their shoulders. Some of the contributions made by the parents and other interested parties should be used as deserved honorariums to the governors with fixed assistance of R 100.00 or R 150.00 per meeting once in a term as required according to South African Schools Act No.84 of 1996, section 18 of which it is done in other boards or steering committees which govern projects as their contributions, expenses and skills are acknowledged after attending such meetings and the councils of universities are entitled to some form of compensation for their expenses incurred and services rendered in the university.

- The SGBs should professionalise its structure in order to rope the best governors from society and the country as a whole to oversee schools for the significance of the children, so this needs some fund-raising from the parents' community in order to finance this aspect so that they may hold them accountable and liable with their decisions that they have taken in the school as their employers. The contributions made by the parents and other stakeholders for the good cause will make them recognizable shareholders in the performance of the school and therefore entitled to the quarterly report to assess if the school is on the right track to achieve the set goals.

With this concept in place at the schools the attendance will improve and could be able to get the governors with necessary skills and expertise to govern the schools as intended by the act which is to promote the school's best interests and ensure that all students receive a high-quality education, designate, suggest, support, and establish policies, and administer school finances for the benefit of the learners as the end product. Study by Van der Westhuizen (2015:385) cites since the State cannot bear the financial burden alone, parents are morally obligated to contribute to education, since parents are the normal and primary educators. Parents who contribute financially have a greater say in their children's education than they would otherwise have above and beyond the indirect support from paying taxes to the State which redistributes to public education through norms and standards and other applicable laws.

The schools through governing bodies do submit audited statements annually to the department in order to monitor and inspect the usage of public funds allocated to schools if indeed it is being used for the intended purpose as outlined by SASA 84 of 1996, section 43(5). The department can consider making all of these forensic firm members of the DBE's auditors for the duration of the SGB's circle, such that if they are found to be rigging any of the forensic data, they are punished in the form of reimbursing the funds that were lost in the institution where they were tasked to audit. This would reduce the amount of corruption that is occurring and provide necessary support at an early detection so that at the end of the year everything is intact for the benefit of both.

In terms of the percentage obtained from the circuit officials in this study, high percentages from them fall under scale of not sure of which this is a huge setback in our education system to have support staff who are mainly not sure of what is transpiring in their own schools which they have to support in a daily basis in order to carry out their teaching assignments effectively. The department of education should take care of this aspect to ensure that knowledgeable employees are found in Vhembe District who have been hired to support schools whenever they run to them for assistance as well as the governors as they usually run to the circuit if

there are challenges in their schools; so, administrators who are not sure of what is happening could not be useful to the teachers and governors.

- The department of education and governing bodies should at all times create a space for social cohesion in roping the local authority like councilors, political leaders, union leaders, civic organisations, traditional leaders, pastors, social workers and community at large should come to the board to assist the school to improve the state of affairs to profit the learners, parents and community as a whole by creating jobs for youths from their local schools where they can be hired as general assistants and educational assistants in order to reduce the overload of work placed upon the teachers by the employer to ensure that they focus much on offering class education to the learners in the classroom. Traditional leaders, political leaders and councilors as well as pastors should be encouraged to include one item of educational interests in their daily social gatherings in order to cautionise youth about the importance of education, their influence could have a positive impact on raising education awareness for the development of the society. The domestic authority should get involved at an early stage in their local school affairs if things do not go well as expected by the department of education in terms of the agreed expectations amongst all major stakeholders, but regulation also states it perfect that local power does not have any statutory powers to intervene with professional matters (Nash, 2015:15).
- It is highly recommended that lesson plans, which are provided by the department, should be monitored by the same department through circuit office officials charged with such responsibilities working hand in hand with department section heads at school level. The study has shown that 55% of circuit officials are not sure if the lesson plans used in Vhembe District public schools are up-to-date and almost 50% of administrators are not sure if lesson plans are checked regularly on a weekly basis in Vhembe District public schools. Compliance to Annual Teaching Plan should be the responsibility of the department through circuit office and district office.

5.3 Conclusion

Education is a key to economic freedom transformation and greater opportunity as well as prosperity and everybody should be concerned if indeed South Africans want to see the country being developing like developed countries in the names of the USA, China, Germany and UK just to mention a few, which do contribute positively to their own economy through the skills their countries have.

With the statement written above, it is very clear that priority has to be given in South African education system in ensuring that the school governing bodies which do govern schools do possess the necessary skills as they have to develop policies, support educators in executing professional duties as well as to discipline them if they go beyond the limit of their operations.

The democratically elected SGBs could be effective if the parents elect knowledgeable people to be in the helm of these structures, also the people with the right skills should come forward in convincing other constituencies that they can do the right job on behalf of them as major stakeholders and shareholders of the education where the school is located as one of their asset/instrument to use to produce useful products which will transform its societies to be a good place to live in as the main role that could be played by the education in any society/country, as people do live better lives if they are educated as they can able to venture in formal markets with the skills their have of which that will make them contribute to their societies in one way or another once they start having an income also to be leaders of different community structures for the benefit of all who live in such areas.

All the stakeholders which regard education as their primary objectives in their localities must have to come together to make sure that schools do have stable governance with responsibility and accountability to its societies, this can only be achieved if school community do not neglect their roles they have to play where they stay as responsible citizens therefore the government alone could not achieve to educate the nation and to create stable governance without defects at their schools, their intervention and involvement to the governance of their schools could pay huge dividend which will make them proud in future as they can produce people with the scarce skills from their schools who will contribute positively in return after they have graduated in those chosen fields, than relying on the foreign nationals to provide those scarce skills services. Government is doing a lot to make sure that schools do have capable

people to govern, so each and every citizen has got a role to fulfill in assisting government to get most capable SGB members to take education to another level in terms of governance for the benefit of the children and the entire society.

6. Summary of the key findings

The findings of this study would inform the department of education, school administration and government on the benefits of the stakeholder involvement on the same footing to achieve academic excellence in the schools' performance from grade R to grade 12 when it comes to Mathematics, Science and Commerce to add value on South African economy. The study would also be useful in exposing the oversights, ignorance and imposition by the department of education on the children's future without the participation of the primary educators in the process as the law dictates. In the study it was exposed that 57% of female participants took place compared to 43% male participants; this could be a mirror of education fraternity that is dominated by a certain gender which could attribute to the set-up of the community in the whole country where majority of the people are women. This study will assist the government through Education Ministry to formulate policies that would create conducive environment for effective stakeholder involvement by enhancing its capacity fully in order to carry out its obligation and to add to the dearth of quality stakeholder involvement in management function that collapses the entire system in the school if there is vacuum of one or both in the school.

The study was conducted using different means which are currently applicable to collect data as used in this research like electronic data base searching, completed questionnaires from the primary participants of the study, hard copies from four sampled schools of school results and school performance analysis for period of six years, hand searching of key local journals and international journals, relevant textbooks from libraries in South Africa, searching of specialist websites, published articles, verdicts by South African courts on obligations of the school governing bodies and department of education as well as my personal observations whilst conducting this study which led to the following key findings on this study in terms of the literature review and primary research findings as outlined below:

- The study found that the department of education does not comply to its constitutional obligation without intervention of civic organisations like Equal Education and Section 27 which demand accountability in terms of providing ample resources to the schools like building ample toilets, provision of ample infrastructure, including ample classroom spaces & equipment, learner-teacher support materials (LTSM), laboratories, grade R resources in a form of big block area, reading area, Mathematics and Science area, art area, games area, fantasy play area as these bring the real world into reality to a five or six year old child but such is compromised as the department does not provide all these resources to the schools and grade R classes in particular in the country. The single most important investment any country can make to its people, education has intrinsic and instrumental value in creating societies that are better able to respond to the challenges of the 21st century (NPD-2030, 2012:296).
- The study exposed the infrastructure gaps between urban schools compared to township schools and remote rural schools due to Covid-19 pandemic as the schools were anticipated to re-open at level 3 of lockdown after almost two months of total shutdown but the lives of the pupils and teachers should be protected from contracting the coronavirus whilst at school; this prompted the delay as huge pressure was mounting from teachers' unions and governing bodies associations to the department until the schools without sanitation and water have those basic facilities as part of the measures wanted to be in place to prevent the spread of the disease at our schools. Study also reveals that independent schools were ready from day one of re-opening to deal with the virus in terms of the requirements set by the National Command Council of Covid-19 lockdown led by the president.
- The study revealed that Covid-19 has exposed our education system in several areas which are lacking to be regarded as the best in the continent in terms of availability of space to accommodate learners at a go and with teachers providing services to the children every time on time during school hours. The system for rotation of grades adopted by the department of education to effect teaching and learning without a danger of spreading corona virus at a high speed whereby 20 learners in classroom is a permissible number in terms of Covid-19 protocols do affirm that indeed to have normal teaching and learning in public schools there should be more than what we have currently as country in our public schools whereby our independent

schools do comply to the required number of learners in class which should not exceed 30 to 35 per teacher in terms of the standard of a normal class never experienced challenges compared to public schools.

- The literature review in terms of the backlog of infrastructure has found the data provided by the provincial departments and national department not acquiescent when it comes to provision of classrooms; provision of decent toilets from pit latrine toilets; water provisions; provisions of learner-teacher support materials (LTSM); staff establishments; provision of schools in rural areas, townships and urban areas and such contribute to poor planning as there is no reliable information available to be used for the undertaking when addressing these challenges.
- This study found that the sports have the potential to unleash talents from learners in schools, however, the department of education has neglected this responsibility at the current moment; sports are no longer prioritized in the education of a child in South Africa like before when the apartheid regime was in power. In the two previous administrations before democratic dispensation, sports were administered by provincial administration for example well established rugby leagues have been in existence since 1920 in the country and players were scouted from schools to play in those leagues which were there per province.
- The study found that in most schools, security measures of the school is weak, particularly at public school where the security personnel does fulfil its assigned functions without necessary resources and compliance to what they are ought to do. At independent schools, security of learners, teachers and support staff seem to be highly strong as they do put tight measures to be followed by anyone who associates himself or herself with the institution as well as anyone visiting the institution for that matter. The study also found that in three of the public schools sampled, only one has got security personnel and the other two do not have such security personnel at their disposal which is likely to put the lives of the learners, teachers, support staff and school assets at risk.
- The study found that the scale of violence in South African institutions has increased drastically to an extent that teachers, learners and support staff are no longer safe at the place of learning and no longer sure if they will return home alive from schools where they are stationed; the literature review findings reveal that anything bad could happen at any given point in our schools ranging from bullying, killing, robbery, razing of school property, raping, sexual harassment, kidnapping, squabbling, drug abuse-addicts, stabbing and intimidation, there is no single province which is not affected by what has been alluded herein though Gauteng province has been the most vulnerable than them all when it comes to killing of learners by gangsterism and fellow learners. The study also affirmed that despite all these challenges being high in Gauteng province, it has been proven that the MEC and his team are performing exceptional well in this aspect by providing immediate necessary support to the victims and the school concerned as well as to hold the perpetrators accountable which seems to be a challenge in these other provinces.
- The study found that governors instead of being equal partners of the department of education, they are merely equal partners in papers but in reality the department of education is not yet ready to embrace them as equal partners in the education of their children, a number of decisions for imposition by the department without doing thorough consultations with governors have been uncovered particularly in public schools, one salient example of imposition by the department is a national cry on comprehensive sexuality education curriculum “as parents and a society, we feel that we have not been consulted and all these ideas have just been imposed on us”, Matakanye Matakanye, General Secretary-National Association of Governing Bodies (Sehloho, 2019). Thereafter, parents and School Governing Bodies (SGBs) who are regarded by the Department of Education as a critical stakeholders in their children’s education, will need to be informed and brought on board (Badenhorst, 2018). However, Gauteng province under the MEC Panyaza Lesufi has been exceptional in championing the consultation process in most if not all crucial decisions taken which affect the learners or parents of the learners as most important stakeholders or shareholders in the education of their children.
- The literature review revealed that in some parts of the country we still have accounting officers known as principals, who do not want to involve the SGBs in the governance matters of their schools as per SASA 84

of 1996 expects as clearly seen in Kroonstad, Free State province wherein the responsibilities which ought to be performed by the School Governing Body were performed by the principal and the department of education in Free State was alerted about this ultra vires by the principal but nothing was done to enforce the constitutional obligation of the parents who are elected to serve as governors.

- The study found that the experts are mostly isolated when the curriculum is being designed and discussed for implementation; salient case is African languages which is still primarily decided by white academics at the expense of African Languages academics who are used as translators in the process other than as policy makers and content design architecture to be implemented at the higher education for training teachers simultaneously to basic education for learners. Crucial decision should be taken with the inclusion of the role players who will be affected by the decision one way or another as implementers or as recipients.
- The study found that National Development Plan does champion the inclusive partnership in educating the societies and it is ahead of this concept, but the study found that the department is dragging its feet to realize what has been documented in NDP as it clearly states that the department should ensure that a conducive space is created for all role players to partake in the education of their children in order to realize their envisaged community development. The interests of all stakeholders should be aligned to support the common goal of achieving good education outcomes that are responsive to community needs and economic development (NDP-2030, 2012:303). This is in line with the South African Constitution, Section 41(1)(h)(iii) which augments that the major stakeholders should be consulted on issues which directly affect them.
- One of the critical findings of the study is that minimum requirement should be included on top of the current requirement qualifying oneself to be a guardian or parent of a learner at the school; matric certificate has been proposed by majority of parents as one of the key requirement that will enable the parents to understand the financial concept and the application of SASA which is a law as they believe that to handle those aspects they need someone with better understanding of how law of governance and school finance prescript operate in the school in order to have functional governance which will be in a good position to hold the school accountable. The study also found that some governors and experts believe that a mother tongue should be used when training or work-shopping the governors to ensure absorption of the contents and fully implementation with full understanding.
- The key finding on the usage of public funds between public and independent schools is that the independent school does account to the board and parents-community responsible and accountable to as the principal and the finance clerk should have kept the records of what have been done as decided to be done for the school and the external auditor should audit the school finances in order for the principal as accounting officer and finance clerk as finance officer do present the financial report to the board for its approval and eventually to the parents-community as major stakeholders and shareholders of the school. Whereas public schools account to SGB and the department of education and to parent-community, this system is not tight compared to the system in place at independent schools as it lacks severe consequences on the part of the principals who do not comply with the prescripts in place in terms of literature review findings.
- Another key finding on the part of school finances is that at public schools, headmasters as ex-officio of School Governing Bodies and as accounting officers of institutions do exploit the finance committees for their own benefits unlike at independent schools. The lack of considerate control on how school finances should be governed and managed by the SGB members in co-operation with the school principals as the accounting officers do expose the governors with elementary education as they do not have rudimentary knowledge to use in the affairs of school governance and handling of school finances which ultimately compel them to leave everything in the hands of the principals as to what should be done with the school money for schools to function. This is the same observation documented by Mncube (2005), who highlights that many factors prominent in the deficiency of parental participation on school governing bodies range from lack of confidence and expertise caused by the absence of lack of training; socio-economic status; unequal power relations; poor sharing of information; poor organisation and a high turnover rate of governors; the rural-urban divide; language barriers; different cultural expectations of diverse communities (Mncube, 2005; Mncube et al.2011).

- This study also revealed that challenges facing governance at public schools is just a national phenomenon issue of governance in our public schools, public institutions and state owned companies as the literature review exposed the governance crisis at SABC and University of Fort Hare, which prompted the intervention by responsible line ministers of these institutions in order to bring sound and good administration to these institutions for the benefit of the society at large. Another aspect shown by literature review is that SGBs are elected but board members and council members are appointed whereby they get remuneration to perform their constitutional obligations whereas the SGB voluntarily serve the local schools without any remuneration.
- The study revealed that the department often avoid challenges face by the SGB and as such, they are not providing enough support that is why in most schools, the SGB sit with challenges for a very long time without resolving them to the detrimental and despair of the governors committed in clean governance at the school ultimately the administration of the school is affected.
- The study intensely found that the department of education throughout the country does not act pro-actively against corruption, mismanagement of funds, abuse of power by the principal or SGB members, unwanted relationship between teachers and learners at the school, eminent misconduct by teachers, unwelcome threats, but will make sure that the whistle-blower is exposed rather than taking precautions on what has been reported to be happening at the school which ultimately will lead to regrettable situations as revealed in the study, prevention is better than cure; cure needs a lot of resources, for instance; extensive counselling, extensive investigation, paying for litigations and putting tight measures in place.
- The study's key finding on Mathematics is that at grade 8 and grade 9 respectively, that is where the challenge of Mathematics is very salient, the results provided by school A which is a public school and school B which is independent school for grade 7 validate this concept that at primary level there is no any big challenge when it comes to Mathematics but grade 8 and grade 9 which is a GET band in secondary school is the issue of urgent attention to be addressed by the department of education as national crisis purported by a number of factors as mentioned in the recommendations at chapter 5 and proposals laid down to deal with the failure rate which becomes clear compared to grade 7 where learners could pass Mathematics from 80% to 100% at primary level but when going to secondary level at GET band challenges now prompt in on this subject.
- The study also found that children living with their biological parents or grandparents tend to attend schooling far better than those who live with their siblings, other relatives, other people not related to them or themselves being the head of the households. The same rate of attendance is squarely discovered on children who were supposed to receive social grants but are not receiving them; their schooling attendance is also poor, eventual the school performance of such child is likely to be affected to the worst in terms of their end year results.
- One of the key findings of this study is that in most public schools at secondary level, records of school results are rarely kept for reference purposes and usage in the study of this nature particularly at lower grades, the records which are found in public schools are for grade 12 results but hard to find the records of these other grades from 8 to 11. Both schools sampled for this study failed to provide subject analysis from 2015 to 2018 for grade 8 to grade 11. This ideology by the secondary schools might be having a bearing on the failure rate of Mathematics at grade 8 & 9 as the school management teams focus much at grade 12 and neglect these other grades, the failure to produce subject analysis for previous years in the lower grades substantiate the theory of what is transpiring in secondary schools as that could be a challenge to the schools themselves if they are to do diagnosis for each subject based on a period of five year previous results in order to generate some useful remedies for long term plan based on what transpired in the period of five years in each subject to date in that school.
- The study also found that most alumni do offer succour to their alma maters as a means of ploughing back and gesture of goodwill in different institutions in a form of academic support, spiritual support, psychologically support, tutoring initiatives, mentoring initiatives, extra-mural activities, financial support to academic deserving students and needy students in order for alma maters to perform well in their academic studies as well as to graduate without hurdles.

- The study exposed the global village that in times of emergence of pandemic no concrete tangible contingency plan to be used in offering online teaching and learning to pupils and students across the globe due to inequalities, poverty and high rate of unemployment in a number of households particularly in remote rural areas, townships and informal settlements which serve as impediments in the implementation of distance learning online to all pupils and students on the same footing. The contact mode in delivering lessons proved to be the most effective option to be used in the country to provide quality learning and teaching to all pupils and students despite living in the fourth industrial revolution.
- The study also revealed that unions particularly SADTU in a number of occasions found wanting by defending its employees who act outside the parameter of the law by preventing employees hired by the department to perform their duties particularly in Mpumalanga province; the three major stakeholders in the education of the child should respect their line of authority invested upon them by law, the department should not go beyond its mandate, the same applies with governance and the registered trade union is also not spare in this matter, their role should be to represent their members who are at first place employees of the department hired by the SGB and the department under the observation of the registered unions.
- The literature review affirmed the support based to local schools from broader community in times of challenges; pastors, traditional leaders, ward councillors, sophisticated citizens, civic organisations and unemployed teachers always step in to fill the void that is caused by infighting between SGBs, Unions and the department in the running of community schools by availing themselves whenever there is a problem at the school which affects effective learning and teaching as well as disrupting the cultured running of examinations.
- The literature review revealed that the department of basic education is committed and is willing to have free violence zone, free harassment zone and free fighting zone amongst teachers and learners from all our schools where teaching and learning should be a prime and a pride of our country in all these schools irrespective of being public or independent school but less efforts in place to make this a reality.

7. The implications of the study

The study was conducted in a remote rural district of Vhembe in Limpopo Province which is dominant by rural remote schools and few township schools called quintile1, 2 & 3 better known as the poor schools in the country during covid-19 pandemic. These schools rely heavily on the 100% funding known as norms and standards from the department in order to execute its constitutional obligations, but it has been exposed that the department is not honouring its constitutional obligations fully to the detrimental of these schools for instance at school A and school C, it was found that there were no security guards during the course of the day and night which puts the school property at risk.

Section 20 of schools are supervised and monitored by the education fraternity from the circuit office up to the level of the head of the department who is the accounting officer in such province; this section deals with finances of the poorest schools in the country and as such the department should always pay caution to their draft budget which is subject to their approval to see to it that security personnel and security features' budgets become part of their priority in order to protect the schools and its properties.

The study focused on four schools and Malamulele circuit (Central & West) that have been sampled however its findings could not be limited to only those four schools, two circuits and to only one district; the findings of this study is a national sensation in South Africa and even if it has to be studied further by another investigation in another district other than Limpopo province it will produce similar outcomes as long as it is done in the Republic of South Africa within this current state of affairs in the country.

Another serious implication of this study should be the financial challenges of the department of education if the department will implement the findings alone without the involvement of the major stakeholders like governing bodies associations and parents' bodies together with school communities' participation in the implementation process.

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